



NEWARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Paul M. Tiernan, Chief of Police

PRESS RELEASE

September 9, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUBJECT: Warrant Obtained for 2006 Rape Suspect; In Custody in Louisiana

The Newark Police Department has obtained a warrant charging John Paul Thomas (12/15/83) with Rape and Burglary for two criminal incidents that occurred October 2006. Thomas is currently being held in Lafayette, LA on charges in that jurisdiction. The Newark Police have placed a detainer on Thomas, ensuring he is held until proceedings can be undertaken to facilitate his return to Delaware.

History

October 8, 2006: Around 5:30 a.m. a rape occurred in the first block of Wilbur Street, Newark. The 19 year-old victim was asleep in her bedroom and was awoken by a male stranger. The suspect forcibly raped the victim, then left the house. Evidence collected as part of the investigation included the suspect's DNA.

October 28, 2006: Around 5:00 a.m. a rape occurred in the 100 block of Haines Street, Newark. The 20 year-old victim was asleep on a couch and was awoken by a male stranger. The suspect moved the victim to a nearby bedroom, forcibly raped the victim, then left the house. Evidence collected as part of the investigation included the suspect's DNA.

January 23, 2007: Newark Police are made aware by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner that the same suspect was the source of the DNA from both rapes.

January 26, 2007: Around 2:15 a.m. an attempted burglary occurred at the residence of a female victim in Lafayette, LA. Entry to the house was unsuccessful. Evidence collected as part of the investigation included the suspect's DNA from blood left at the attempted point of entry.

July 20, 2009: Newark Police are notified by Lafayette Police that the unidentified suspect's DNA from the 1/26/07 attempted burglary is a match to the unidentified suspect's DNA in the two Newark rapes from October 2006. The match is discovered by a hit through the national DNA database, known as CODIS.

December 23, 2009: A rape occurred in Lafayette, LA. Evidence collected as part of the investigation included the suspect's DNA.



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January 2010: Newark Police detectives travel to Lafayette, LA to discuss and compare the related cases. Newark Police detectives interview persons connected to the LA incidents.

February 2010: Newark Police are notified by Lafayette Police that the unknown suspect's DNA from the 12/23/09 rape is a match to the unknown suspect's DNA from the earlier incidents.

March 2010: John Thomas is arrested for a domestic-related crime in Lafayette, LA. Part of the arrest processing for the domestic-related crime is mandatory submission of a DNA sample.

September 1, 2010: Newark Police are notified by Lafayette Police that the DNA of John Thomas is a match to the DNA from the four earlier cases.

September 2, 2010: Newark Police detectives fly to Lafayette, LA. Plans are made for the arrest of John Thomas.

September 3, 2010: Officers from the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Marshall's Office pick up John Thomas from his place of employment aboard an oil rig off the Louisiana Coast. He was brought to the Lafayette Police Department, where he is charged with offenses against Louisiana law.

Thomas was a resident of Delaware in October 2006, living on Tracy Street, in the Kiamensi/Stanton area. It has not yet been determined what, if any, connection he had with the victims.

At the time of this release, it is unknown when Thomas will be returned to Delaware to face two counts of Rape 1st Degree and two counts of Burglary 2nd Degree.

The Newark Police Department acknowledges the Lafayette, LA Police Department, the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners of the Christiana Medical Center, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of the State of Delaware, and the Acadiana Crime Lab of Louisiana for their assistance leading the charges brought against John Thomas.

The Newark Police Department affirms that all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Media Contact: Lt. Brian Henry, Public Information Officer, 302-366-7110 ext 125 or brian.henry@cj.state.de.us.



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Newark Police Chief Paul Tiernan said, “The successful conclusion of these cases is a testament to the labor of the investigating detectives, who did not allow the passage of time to discourage their efforts to identify the person responsible for these violent crimes. I commend the investigators for their commitment to the innocent victims of John Thomas.”

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